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COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR MALDIVES

UNDP assistance requested by the Government of the Republic of Maldives for the period 1982-1986

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*/ This document will be derestricted upon approval of the Country Programme. See document DP/526 which will be issued in June 1981.

INTRODUCTION

Background information

1. The Republic of Maldives is an archipelago of nearly 1,200 coral islands in the Indian Ocean located between the Equator and 7°N Latitude. Grouped together in clusters or "atolls", they form a long, narrow chain about 850 kms. long; their total land area, however, is only about 297 sq. kms. The nearest land mass, India's southern extremity, lies 480 kms. to the northeast. Because of the country's physical remoteness, it has remained relatively uninfluenced by the social and political changes that have affected southern Asia.

2. The population of 143,000 (1977) is scattered over 202 islands; only 19 islands have more than 1,000 inhabitants. Malé, the capital, has a population of 29,000 on its one square mile. The society is closely knit, and unified by the common bonds of religion (Islam) and language (Dhivehi). Each island community is a self-contained economic unit, dependent on the sea around it.

3. The Maldives, with a per capita GNP in 1978 of about $160[1/], is classified as a least developed country (LDC) and is among the 20 poorest countries in the world. Like most island developing countries its resource base is limited. The country is heavily dependent on fishing and tourism and increasingly dependent on imported food. But, in some respects, the Maldives is unlike most LDCs in that it is free of colonial or neo-colonial dependent relationships.

The third country programme

4. This country programme was prepared by the Ministry of External Affairs and the National Planning Agency in close cooperation with the UNDP field office in Malé. UNDP has been supporting the National Planning Agency through the provision of an economic adviser whose services have been extended through March 1981 specifically to assist in preparing the first national plan from which the country programme derives its policy and priority framework. Other United Nations system organizations represented in Maldives, the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF), have been closely involved in this programming exercise and their inputs, as far as they can be forecast for the third programming cycle (1982-1986), have been identified in this document.

5. The Government hopes that this close collaboration among the United Nations system organizations operating in Maldives will be gradually translated in future years into joint programming. The Government realizes that before such a goal can be reached, the United Nations system organizations would have to render their programming methods fully compatible.

6. In August 1980, UNDP invited the Specialized Agencies to participate in the country programming exercise, and sectoral assessments were received from Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the World Bank and International Labour Organisation (ILO). UNICEF and WHO participated in the programming through the active involvement of their country representatives.

1/ World Bank estimate

I. DURATION, TIME-FRAME AND ANTICIPATED RESOURCES

7. The third country programme has been prepared simultaneously with the first national five-year plan, both of which are to cover the same period: 1982-1986. The third country programme period also coincides exactly with the third IPF cycle.

8. The "illustrative" IPF for the 1982-1986 period as approved by the twenty-seventh session of the UNDP Governing Council in June 1980 is $7.0 million compared with a $2.5 million IPF for the second cycle (1977-1981). However, UNDP has advised the Government that it will be necessary for the time being to plan on the basis of 80 per cent of the "illustrative" IPF, or $5.6 million, until UNDP's overall resource situation is clarified.

9. Since it is expected that the second-cycle IPF will be fully delivered before the end of 1981, "borrowing" of $750,000 from the third-cycle IPF has been approved for the final year of the 1977-1981 programme period to provide a smooth transition into the third cycle. This will reduce the resources available for programming during the 1982-1986 period to $4.85 million. After providing an additional 15 per cent of the available resources for adequate programming the total amount presently programmable during the 1982-1986 period increases to $5,577,500.

10. In order to provide for an increasing programme, while remaining within the funding available annually, the annual distribution of resources has been established at 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 per cent, respectively, for each year of the five-year period as follows:

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	Total
(In $ million)	1.004	1.060	1.116	1.171	1.227	5.578

11. In order to ensure effective utilization of the available resources, and to maintain the flexibility needed to react to changes in the Government's priorities and to respond to presently unforeseen needs, the country programme and projects will be subject to joint periodic reviews by the Government and UNDP.

12. Additional support will be sought during the country programme period from the regional and interregional programmes, the Special Measures Fund for LDCs the Capital Development Fund, and such other UNDP-managed sources of funding as may be appropriate.

II. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

13. Throughout its recorded history, the Maldives has managed to remain self-governing, except for one period under Portugese rule in the 16th century. In 1887, the Maldives became a British protectorate, but there was no British presence in Malé. Independence was attained in 1965, and the Sultanate was replaced by a constitutional republic in which the President is nominated by the Citizens' Majlis (House of Representatives) and confirmed in a nationwide referendum.

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14. Over the past two years, the new Government has pursued economic and social policies aimed at decentralizing decision making and has embarked on a major development programme to increase the population's welfare with special emphasis on the previously neglected outlying atolls. During the five-year planning period the Government will seek to achieve the following broad objectives: a) maintenance of an economic growth rate which will ensure significant increases in real per capita income; b) development of an institutional and economic infrastructure conducive to the country's development on the basis of an equitable distribution of income; and, c) provision of services and facilities to the population which will increase their welfare and provide the opportunities for the prople's effective participation in the development process.

III. DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND RELATED UNDP ASSISTANCE

15. The country programme has been formulated in conjunction with the national five-year plan and is aimed at supporting the attainment of the principle objectives of the plan. As such, greatest emphasis will be given to the development of the agriculture and marine fisheries industries, expansion of the transport and communications infrastructure, and manpower development through education and vocational training.

16. An evaluation of prior UNDP technical co-operation undertaken in preparation for the present country programming exercise disclosed that UNDP assistance was most effective in those key areas where the Government is placing greatest emphasis; i.e. in furthering the development of the country's natural and human resource potentials (principally expansion of the marine fisheries industry and manpower development) and in promoting development of the required economic and social infrastructure. A further conclusion reached on the basis of past experience is that, due to the absolute shortage of skilled manpower required by the economy, as well as for the social infrastructure, manpower planning and development would be given emphasis in the present programme.

17. Inevitably, a substantial part of the third country programme is committed to activities started in the second cycle. Thus the Government wishes UNDP to continue to assist in several important fields including agriculture, fisheries, education, health, transport and communications and development planning. The continuation of assistance in these sectors may be seen as a logical extension or consolidation of progress already made. In other cases it may be viewed as a second stage in the development of a particular activity, or diversification into a related field.

On-going activities to be continued during the third cycle

A. Education and training

18. The overall development objectives of the Government in the education sector are to expand the educational system and to improve the quality of education.

19. The education system in Maldives is in a transitional stage. The modernization of the society has created new educational needs. The Government has embarked on a programme of renewal and expansion of the educational system whereby emphasis is put on universal primary education, an increase in the output of secondary and vocational schools and the upgrading of teacher training.

20. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of development resources for this sector in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF for expansion of the educational system and to improve the quality of education. The Government also proposes to utilize IPF resources for rural youth vocational training, further strengthening of the Vocational Training Centre in Malé and for a book production programme;

b) UNDP regional IPF for teacher training in regional institutions, including school headmaster training;

c) UNICEF assistance for the development of primary education in the outlying atolls; and

d) Bilateral assistance to provide long-term academic studies for school leavers and for building more community schools in the atolls.

B. Health

21. The approach which will be utilized to achieve the targets set in the Country Health Programme is the accelerated development of primary health care. This will be accomplished in the following ways:

a) Development of basic health services through the improvement of community health and family health worker performance and through the activation of multi-purpose mobile health teams;

b) Development of regional hospitals;

c) Execution of an intensive nation-wide rain water tank and latrine construction programme;

d) Provision of nutrition education;

e) Support for the development of traditional medicines;

f) Establishment of a supply and distribution systems for drugs;

g) Holding of a malaria eradication campaign through community action; and

h) Continuation of appropriate health manpower training and development of a health reporting and monitoring system.

22. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of available external resources in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF for auxiliary health manpower training and medical education;

b) UNDP regional IPF for medical education (fellowships), consultancies and United Nations Volunteers;

c) WHO Regular Programme for health services planning and management, communicable disease prevention and control, and promotion of environmental health;

d) UNICEF for direct support to the development of primary health care and safe drinking water and sanitation programmes;

e) WFP support in connection with the UNICEF-assisted water supply programmes;

f) UNCDF assistance to construct health centres, rain water collection schemes and public latrines in the outer islands not covered by UNICEF programmes, and for rain water collection in the poorest areas of Malé; and

g) Bilateral assistance to finance Malé's water supply, sanitation and waste disposal project.

C. Agriculture

23. The objective of the Government in this field is to develop services aimed at creating self sufficiency in fruit and vegetable production, the rearing of small livestock and the rehabilitation of coconut plantations. Emphasis is given to supporting the existing agricultural centre, the prime objective of which is to test crop varieties and production methods for Maldivian conditions, and for the training of the local population in agricultural techniques.

24. The Government intends to establish three other agricultural substations which would complement the existing centre as well as to establish coconut and firewood nurseries.

25. In this connection, the Government has requested assistance for a large-scale agricultural development project which is to be jointly supported by UNDP, WFP and FAO/Technical Co-operation Programme (TCP). WFP will be asked to provide assistance, including non-food items. UNV may also be asked to participate in this programme at a later stage.

26. Accordingly, Government plans to make use of external development resources for agricultural development in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF to finance the project mentioned above which will develop self-sufficiency among Maldivians in producing fruits and vegetables, the raising of small livestock, the development of coconut plantations and the establishment of firewood plantations;

b) UNDP regional IPF for the training of manpower in this sector and for consultancy services;

c) FAO/TCP for pest control including the eradication of crows and rats; and

d) WFP assistance for providing food aid and transport for agricultural development activities.

D. Fisheries

27. Marine fishing is the most important economic activity in the Maldives. At present there are no facilities in the country for education in fisheries science. The Government recognises the urgent need for more educated personnel in this discipline if the country is to obtain maximum benefit from its ocean resources. Further modernization and diversification of the fisheries industry is of high priority to the Government both to include more species in the catch and to improve the methods of fishing.

28. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of external development resources during the 1982-1986 programme period in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF to support education in fisheries sciences, a feasibility study of bait culture and marine fisheries research activities. Fisheries research activities will include support for the development of a fisheries research institute with facilities for the recording, storage and processing of information on fisheries. It is envisaged that a programme will be undertaken for the production of bait fish;

b) UNDP regional IPF for training and short-term expertise;

c) International Development Association (IDA) resources for further training for the fishing industry and the possible expansion of the mechanization programme; and

d) Bilateral assistance to finance a frozen fish export programme.

E. Transport and communications

Civil aviation

29. There has been a significant increase in air traffic to the Maldives mainly due to the development of tourism. For quick and efficient transport within the country, however, the need for domestic airports is evident. Therefore, the development objective in this field includes opening three regional airports.

30. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of external development resources in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF for building scientific and technological infrastructure in the civil aviation sector; and

b) UNDP regional IPF for training.

Telecommunications

31. In a country such as the Maldives, telecommunications play an important part as a means of social interaction, for increasing political cohesiveness and for efficient public administration. As the establishment of an effective telecommunications system is an essential part of the infrastructure, the Government is giving serious attention to the upgrading and expansion of the inter-atoll telecommunications system.

32. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of external development resources in the following manner:

a) UNDP regional IPF for training telecommunications personnel and conducting a feasibility study for a nationwide telecommunications network; and

b) Bilateral assistance to establish the backbone of the telecommunications network.

F. Development policy and planning

Development planning

33. The National Planning Agency was established in November 1978 with the objective of preparing the first national development plan. It is the objective of the Government to strengthen the internal organization of the National Planning Agency so that it can systematically carry out its planning functions.

34. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of external assistance in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF for the training of National Planning Agency staff; and

b) Bilateral assistance for advisory services.

Statistics

35. The first phase of the present statistics project will be completed by the end of 1981. In order to consolidate and expand the activities of the Department of Statistics, further assistance is required in the form of expertise, training and equipment.

36. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of development support in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF for the training abroad of statisticians and for the purchase of essential equipment; and

b) UNDP regional IPF for supplementary training.

New activities

37. The Government has decided that the third country programme of UNDP assistance should also be oriented towards several new priority areas such as marine transport, human settlements and tourism.

G. Marine transport

38. The Government proposes to train Maldivian officers for ocean going ships, as well as for inter-atoll transport vessels. The basic objective is to provide local engineers and nautical officers for service in the national shipping company.

39. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of external development resources in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF for the training of ships officers; and

b) AsDB to help strengthen the inter-atoll transport system.

H. Tourism

40. The Government established the Atoll Advisory Board which is mainly aimed at the development of the hitherto isolated and somewhat neglected outlying islands.

41. The first step in this direction would be to develop the island of Gan as a holiday resort.

42. Accordingly, the Government plans to make use of external development resources in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF for advisory services for the development of Gan as a holiday resort;

b) UNDP regional IPF for consulting services and training; and

c) Bilateral assistance to prepare a master plan for tourism development on a country-wide basis.

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I. Human settlements

43. It is the objective of the Government to prepare a detailed physical plan for Malé, including the development of reclaimed areas and the upgrading of the area between the existing town and the new one.

44. Accordingly, the Government plans to utilize external development resources in the following manner:

a) UNDP country IPF for strengthening of the Architectural Section of the Office of the President for the planning of Malé; and

b) UNEP for short-term consultancies.

IV. RELATIONSHIP WITH ACTIVITIES AT THE INTERCOUNTRY AND GLOBAL LEVELS

45. While the country programme is primarily directed towards national goals, these may be seen to coincide with the global priorities of the United Nations in the following areas:

a) Basic needs programmes

i. Rural development

Outer atoll development, pilot (atoll) integrated rural development, and training, and agricultural development.

ii. Urban poverty

Urban housing, sanitation, environmental planning, land reclamation, and water supply for Malé's poor.

iii. Primary health care - International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade

All programmes designed to meet the objectives of "Health for All by the Year 2000" and to supply pure drinking water and sanitation facilities to all by 1990, and auxiliary health manpower training.

iv. Literacy and comprehensive education

All activities related to the objectives of providing free universal primary and secondary education and to eradicating illiteracy.

b) Development themes

i. Environment

It is the Government's policy to give serious consideration to the environmental implications of its development activities and

particularly to the UNDP-supported activities;

ii. Women in development

It is considered important to design special programmes for women as well as to promote a greater involvement of women in all development activities;

iii. New international economic order

Programmes to strengthen communication and trading links, improve terms of trade and attract foreign investment on favourable terms; and

iv. Technical co-operation among developing countries

The Government considers TCDC a means for promoting development rather than a development priority, and welcomes the inclusion of TCDC elements in those activities for which UNDP assistance is requested.

ANNEX

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

A. Resources taken into account for programming

Resources available	US $
80 per cent of 1982-1986 "illustrative" IPF	5,600,000
Less borrowing from third cycle IPF	(750,000)
	4,850,000
15 per cent allowance for "adequate programming"	727,500
	5,577,500

B. Use of resources

1.	Programmed (all sectors)	
	a) On-going projects	$ 3,672,000
	b) New projects included in the country programme	$ 1,728,000
	c) Earmarked for specific objectives and activities for which projects are to be identified at a later stage	$ 177,500
	TOTAL	$ 5,577,500
2.	Reserve	$ 1,422,500
	TOTAL RESOURCES	$ 7,000,000

Although it is not possible to quantify with a reasonable degree of certainty the resources which may be available to the Maldives during the 1982-1986 period from the funds mentioned in paragraph 12 above, the Government wishes to avail itself of the opportunity presented by the country programme exercise to include the estimated requirements for funding from these sources. Such an approach is encouraged by UNDP without implying any commitment on UNDP's part.

The following tentative amounts would be required:

a) Capital Development Fund	$ 2,000,000
b) Special Measures Fund for LDCs	$ 500,000
c) Funds-in-trust	$ 9,000,000
d) Intercountry programmes	(to be determined)
e) Other	$ 2,500,000

Table 1. Annual distribution of IPF resources by sector

Sector	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	Total	Percent
Transport and Communications	215,000	185,000	235,000	290,000	355,000	1,280,000	22.9
Agriculture and Fisheries	175,000	185,000	295,000	340,000	273,000	1,268,000	22.8
Education	310,000	380,000	235,000	80,000	160,000	1,165,000	20.9
Development Planning	109,000	105,000	110,000	138,000	138,000	600,000	10.7
Tourism	80,000	80,000	110,000	173,000	27,000	470,000	8.4
Human Settlements	51,000	61,000	65,000	89,000	89,000	355,000	6.4
Health	63,000	63,000	65,000	61,000	10,000	262,000	4.7
Unprogrammed	950	725	500	275	175,050	177,500	3.2
TOTAL	1,003,950	1,059,725	1,115,500	1,171,275	1,227,050	5,577,500	100.0

Table 2. Other United Nations system organizations' regular programmes
(Estimates - US dollars)

Sector/Agency	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	TOTAL
Health						
WHO	334,000	335,000	N/A			669,000
UNICEF	*490,000	N/A	N/A			490,000
WFP	N/A	N/A	N/A			-
Education						
UNICEF	*321,000	N/A	N/A			321,000
Agriculture						
WFP	184,000	107,000	202,000			493,000
TOTAL	1,329,000	442,000	202,000			1,973,000

*Available for 1980-1982 period.